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ART. V. — *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, with Elucidations*. By THOMAS CARLYLE. New York : Wiley & Putnam. 2 vols. 12mo.

AN odd sort of taste in moral painting seems to be the rage among us at the present day. Whether for biographical portraiture, or representing historical scenes and the great landscape of humanity, but two colors are in request ; if an object or an individual is not as dark as midnight, it is taken for granted that it is like the drifted snow ; so that all the tints of the rainbow, which were formerly thought of some value in giving a true presentment of nature, are completely exploded, and the intellectual artist who is well furnished with white-lead and lampblack is equipped with all the materials which he is likely to need in his vocation, — at least, till the taste shall alter. Formerly it was thought that something might be said on both sides of moral questions ; but now it is discovered that they have but one side, and that of course is ours. Once it was imagined that men acted from mixed motives, not always thoroughly self-consistent ; but now it is known that there is no such wavering ; they are either utterly base, or unchangingly bright, through the whole history of their lives. The old distinction of saints and sinners, which some have thought too indiscriminate and sweeping, is now found to be the true account of human nature ; and woe to him who shall call in question this grand discovery of the day ! Should he intimate that he prefers a two-sided view of any subject, before making up his mind ; or suggest that any historical character may have been formed, not of one material only, but with elements mixed in various proportions ; still more, should he discover that humanity consists in deeds as well as words, and that, in balancing matters between sayings and doings, the former are least to be trusted of the two, — he shall find no quarter from the sons of wrath who will combine against him ; he shall by no means be acknowledged as the lawful proprietor either of a head or a heart.

That Carlyle addresses himself to this state of mind is one reason of his reaching an ascendancy in this country, which, with all his power, he is far from possessing in his own. In his moral portrait-painting, all are either angels or

evil spirits ; the latter, however, not so much disparaged as one might think, since many of them are represented as piously disposed, and all as likely to be angels after a fashion, before they have done. Certainly, there is something pleasant in this. It is refreshing, for example, to find that Mahomet was a very worthy and simple-hearted man ; and we may hereafter be relieved to find that Herod the Great was a model in the domestic relations, Frederic of Prussia remarkable for his tenderness, George the Fourth a temperance apostle, and Napoleon, like Noah Worcester, a fast friend of peace. In consistency with this principle, we have Cromwell presented to us as nothing more than a sincere and honest man ; and doubtless the shade of that illustrious person will be astonished, as well as delighted, to find himself thus equipped with virtues never claimed by himself nor his adorers ; though his joy may be dashed with some misgivings whether the hard-hearted world can be persuaded to believe it. And well it may ; since, if he was an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile, throughout his ascending career, he has certainly been more belied than often happens to a man without some fault of his own.

We are sometimes, we are grieve to say it, when we read this writer, afflicted with a doubt whether he himself is fully persuaded of the truths which he dispenses to others. There is sufficient appearance of earnestness, but it is shaded by something pompous, burlesque, and queer ; and those who are wrought upon by his eloquence, at the very moment when they are moved to tears, are sometimes dismayed to see him apparently dying within with laughter, which it would be uncourtly to indulge, but which he cannot find it in his heart or his manners to suppress. His style is well calculated for such evolutions ; curiously doubled and twisted, better suited to darken and veil, when necessary, than to unfold the author's meaning ; it is sometimes beautiful and inspiring, then antic to the verge of folly, often shining radiantly upon the subject, but, like the flame of the revolving lighthouse, obscured about half the time. At times, we find it abounding in rich native humor ; at others, rejoicing in venerable jests which we hail as our acquaintances of many years' standing. It is a style not calculated to attract the reader, and therefore, as if in revenge, it browbeats him with fearful intimations of things which no eye but the writer's can see.

Full though it is of information, all is abrupt and broken, as if the mass lay undigested, and nothing had found its place in his mind ; his words, entirely unacquainted with their neighbours, seem doubtful whether to laugh or cry at the positions in which they stand, and at the novelty of the service which they are expected to perform. It is said by his admirers, that his style is natural to him ; but the chief evidence of this is the difficulty of conceiving how a man of his great powers and attainments should consent to such a display of grimaces and contortions, which are more like Harlequin's exploits at still-vaulting than the graceful movements of a well-bred man, unless there is something in the habit of his mind which leads him into it against or without his will. There is no pretence for calling it nature, except that it is a great reach of art ; nor would it ever have been regarded as natural, save that no one can conceive how Carlyle could ever have adopted such a dialect of shreds and patches from his own deliberate choice. The effect of it is to throw suspicion on his sincerity of feeling. When he declaims against the large and thriving progeny of "shams," it strikes us that there is something in it of the bitterness of a family quarrel ; for it is the distinctive peculiarity of that interesting race to have the most painful sensibility to the hollowness of others, connected with the most joyous unconsciousness of their own.

The great reason why Carlyle is welcomed so generally in this country by those who dislike his style and do not admire his ways of thinking is, that he manifests a strong friendship for his race ; though it is a friendship of that kind which implies no confidence in them, and is shown in the easy and pleasant way of contempt for things existing, without proposing for their welfare any measures or improvements of his own. This distinction, however, he will not be able to keep ; the sceptre is already passing into a thousand other unclean and scrambling hands. For, now, not only the moralist by profession, but the man of letters, — the small poet who wants a market for his unsaleable wares, — ay, and the peddling writer of fiction, whose cheap literature is likely to cost much to the rising generation, — have discovered that the tone of humanity suits the public taste ; and, as the language is easily assumed, the demand will soon have a full supply, so that there is some danger of the miller being drowned by

the overabundance of the stream. That the demand indicates a real and substantial change in the general feeling is not so sure ; it may be only a reaction from the misanthropic style, of which Byron set the fashion, and which was thought so high and graceful but a few years ago. But evidently, it will cease to be a distinction ; and readers will look more to the prevailing spirit of a writer than to this sign which he hangs out before him. It may be, though this is almost too good to hope, that words will sink in estimation, and deeds for once rise above them, bringing about the happy day when humanity shall not only be sung, sworn, and shouted, but lived and acted out for the benefit and blessing of mankind.

But, leaving the style and spirit of this distinguished writer to bear witness for themselves, we come to the subject of this work, — unquestionably one of the greatest men that ever lived. So much all must allow ; and a far better man, too, than he was formerly esteemed, when Hume gave the law to historical feeling, and when, in deep sympathy for the unfortunate Charles, men forgot to do justice to the cause and the principles of his opposers. In the present day, the public feeling, as usual in such cases, swings as far as possible to the opposite side ; and Carlyle, in the work before us, outgoing all others, represents Cromwell as a single-hearted man, who always spoke the truth as it was in his heart, and whose whole ambition was to labor humbly in the service of God and man. It is true, he was constantly gaining his own personal ends through all the mutations of public affairs ; but the kingdom, like a ripe peach, dropped into his mouth unsought, when he was looking upward in prayer ; it came to him wholly by the act of Providence, without any self-seeking of his own. We can imagine the grim face of the Protector relaxing into a smile, to find himself so represented, with an aspect far more beautiful than he had ever seen in the glass of his own self-applause. He would rejoice that the flattering painter did not borrow his impressions from such men as Hutchinson, Ludlow, and Vane, thoroughly patriotic and disinterested, who saw through his aims from the beginning, and, with the instinctive sagacity of honest minds, while they gave him full credit for his great services to his country, discerned and brought to light the darker secrets of his soul. Compare the end of his military

course with that of Washington taking leave of his successful army, at the height of his popularity and power, when his soldiers had just complaints to make and grievous wrongs to redress, — and we see at once the difference between a generous love of country and that mixture of patriotism and selfishness which led Cromwell, under the plea of doing justice to his men, to trample on civil restraints, and secure a gain to himself out of all that he had done for his native land, leaving it as a question to future times, which of the two feelings was the mightier, when both evidently had power in his breast.

But with respect to this matter of his sincerity ; how much is meant by the word ? There can be no doubt that his early religious convictions were sincere ; he was sincere in his resistance to the king's oppression, sincere in taking up arms. He sincerely wished to see his country prosperous ; and, with perfect sincerity, he believed that which no doubt was the fact, that he was better able to govern it than any other man. But what observer of human nature does not know how easily selfish motives and interests gain entrance to the heart ? They grow among better principles, like tares among the wheat, so much alike in appearance as to be easily confounded with them, particularly when a man must be his own accuser and judge, and the trial conducted in the dark caverns of his own heart. The great mistake consists in supposing that one is either wholly selfish or wholly sincere, either all black or all white. This is no true description of human nature ; it leads to a wrong estimate of every character to which it is applied. And thus, while great wrong has been done to Cromwell by those who believe that he was false and hollow-hearted from the first, indifferent to the benefit of his country except when it was identical with his own, — or that he was a perpetual hypocrite in religion, using his professions only to hide his own unsoundness from himself and others, — it is equally certain, that to represent him as an impersonation of pure sincerity in all things implies an extent of self-delusion in those who so describe him which it is not easy to understand. We remember that a writer of this school once suggested, that the lover of nature could secure the best view of the landscape, by extending his lower limbs like a colossus, and bowing down the head to look backward through these ungraceful dividers.

If the same rule applies to the world of men, and their views of humanity are taken in this uneasy posture, it would account for the difference of such observers from those who prefer the common perpendicular attitude, as affording equal advantage for correctness of vision, and, on the whole, quite as much delight.

The present biographer disposes of all other accounts of Cromwell in the most summary manner, — not submitting to any sifting process of examination, but setting them down in the mass as false and stupid, because the writers were unable to discern that bright and stainless image of their gigantic subject which has dawned on his own prophetic eye. Noble is “poor Noble,” and Heath “Carrion Heath,” throughout, so called by a jest borrowed from another; probably a very excellent witticism, though the point and sparkle of it are not so easy to see. It is quite possible that even poor Noble and Carrion Heath may have recorded some true particulars of Cromwell's history, which would have interest for those who trace back character to the early influences which helped to form it. But, whether with or without foundation, they are all unceremoniously swept away from the table, and we must content ourselves, as it seems, with whatever Mr. Carlyle chooses to administer. Nor ought we to consider this hard measure; since, if we can enter at all into his own feeling, we shall regard a suggestion of his as an overmatch for any amount of human testimony. This trait, in fact, will be to some the glory, to others the sorrow and shame, of the work before us, — the infinite and sure complacency with which he dispenses his opinions. There is no lack of it in literary men; but nothing as yet has appeared quite equal to the self-glorifying spirit in which this writer revels. It does not seem to us in the purest taste; nor does it inspire in us a confidence answering to his own; but it doubtless has its joys and blessings; and one is, the escape from all the uncertainty which occasionally afflicts those who inquire and ponder before making up their minds. If, like one of his countrymen, he inserts in his daily devotions, “Send us a gude conceit o’ oursells,” he is an encouraging illustration of the truth set forth by the Christian lyricist, —

“It shan’t be said that praying breath
Was ever spent in vain.”

Mr. Carlyle's great discovery, by which he expects to

remove all doubts of Cromwell's sincerity of purpose and patriotism, is to pay no heed to what others have said of him, but to allow him to tell his own story. This is certainly an effectual way to clear him ; for it is surprising, when you come to take their own word for it, how pure the intentions, and how saintly the lives, of most men become. Carlyle declares, what no man doubts, that the spirit of Puritanism was sincere and high, perhaps the most exalted and generous manifestation of self-devotion to conscience ever seen in this world. But our faith in Puritanism is based, not on what it said, but what it did and suffered. None can deny the truth and greatness of those who, in allegiance to duty, renounced their homes and perilled their lives in battles at home and deserts beyond the sea ; their words no man can question, because deeds and sacrifices have made them good. But when we see no uncommon measure of self-denial or sacrifice in the whole history of a man's life, but, on the contrary, find him reaping with both hands a harvest, not perhaps of gain which he despises, but of glory and power which he loves better, always gathering for himself what he most desires out of the ruins of old abuses which his energy has strewn round him, and climbing at last to higher authority and station than thrones and crowns could give, his humble words and heavenly professions may all be true, and yet we are not forward to trust them. We cannot help suspecting that Mammon had a share in his devotions, and that his heart was not given so entirely as he believes to God. In other words, we apprehend that he may be under some self-delusion, so that his language can hardly be a sure presentment of all that is in his heart. But to treat such a man's words as never to be trusted is the same wholesale error as giving them credit without reserve. Self-delusion blends itself with all imposture. It is the retribution of one who deceives others, that he imposes also on himself ; and, after all, the habitual tenor of the life is the only evidence of sincerity on which we confidently rely.

Having disposed of all traditions of Cromwell's early life by that process, shorter and cheaper than investigation, in which this writer excels most others of the time, little remains of his personal history, before he entered on his public walks and duties, save that he opposed a project for draining the fens of Lincolnshire and the isle of Ely by conducting the river

Ouse, which formerly overflowed them, on a raised embankment directly to the sea. There was a popular opposition to this improvement, because the inhabitants enjoyed a right of commoning and fishing in the fens and waters. Cromwell, though with his clear sagacity he must have seen the advantage of the work, resisted it with all his strength and influence, and was called "Lord of the Fens" by the voice of public gratitude and applause. When the plan was renewed in the Commonwealth, he became one of the commissioners to direct it, and afterwards, as Protector, he favored and approved the measure. Those who look in his life for the early dawning of ambition see it in this proceeding, which they ascribe to his love of popularity, caring less for the public welfare than the public will. Carlyle says, that he shall "by no means disentangle that affair from the rubbish-abyssees in which it lies buried"; but he consoles us with the assurance, that Cromwell, on this occasion, resisted injustice in high places. What the injustice was, and wherefore it should be more just after he came to sit in high places than it was before, our author does not condescend to explain, probably because he does not know. He avers that Cromwell did not, in fact, oppose the draining of the fens, though it seems his neighbours were pretty well satisfied that he did; but touching his reasons for opposing it at the time when resistance was the way to popular favor, or for supporting it when he was too high to care for local popularity, Carlyle evidently knows no more than his readers. We are assured that the reasons were right and honorable; the ground of this confidence he does not undertake to tell.

Another passage, which excites his admiration, is a letter of Cromwell to his cousin, Mrs. St. John, which, he says, is indisputable evidence "that man once had a soul." For aught that appears to the contrary, man may have a soul yet; for the letter is like five hundred others which are written every year in New England and every other country, expressing deep confidence and joy in religious convictions; all which Cromwell felt, no doubt, as others feel, and expressed as others of the same religious views did then, and do now, express them. It affords no occasion for this flourish of trumpets:—"Was it not a time for heroes? heroes were then possible!" nor for addressing the reader in the lowly and conciliatory words,—"I pity thee. Brag not, or I shall

have to despise thee." We should not of ourselves have discovered that the danger of bragging was wholly on the reader's side ; but we must confess, that, wherever such a spirit is manifested, contempt is about the best which it deserves. Still, these sins against good manners are equally criminal and alarming, whether encountered in books or parlours ; reverence is not the feeling which they inspire, and they are treated with less ceremony than Chesterfield would altogether approve.

But leaving the heroics, which, though happy and self-glorifying to writers, are not so well suited to enlighten readers, let us endeavour to take a common-sense view of the state of things when Cromwell came forward with resistless energy, and a spirit which, as no one denies, was at the time intent on securing his country's rights and welfare. Lord Chatham concentrated his clear, full view of the subject in a few expressive words : — " There was ambition, there was sedition, there was violence ; but no man shall persuade me that it was not the cause of liberty on the one hand, and tyranny on the other." The hour had come when bounds must be set to the arbitrary power of the sovereign ; the people must submit to him as slaves, or they must draw their line, and say, " Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther." And well it was for the cause of freedom and humanity, that a strong religious feeling rose up, and spread from heart to heart, giving that invincible force and determination which the work required, and without which it would never have been done. So far, the antagonists of Charles have an undoubted right to sympathy, and the heart of the free goes with them. But the difficulty was that they outran the right on one side, as the king had exceeded it on the other ; they became tyrants in their turn ; and thus, setting the example of violating those laws which they professed to establish and secure, they endangered the liberties for which they rose in arms, paved the way to another despotism, more powerful as well as more glorious than the former, and made a new revolution necessary to set their country free. As a judicious historian — no friend of oppression either — says, " They set the example of glaring violations, not only of constitutional law, but of those higher principles of justice and right with which policy has not much to do. Usurping all manner of powers, insulting, plundering, and destroying all who did not support them, im-

peaching bishops for treason simply because they exerted their right to protest, suppressing all freedom of debate, and treating as guilty of breach of privilege every one who said a word against their proceedings ; and all this, because, wholly intent on a single object, they depended on military strength, and resorted to martial means to bring about civil changes, till the soldiery, at first employed as servants, became their absolute masters, governing with a sway so lawless, that almost all were glad at last to exchange the wayward oppression of thousands for the more consistent and lighter despotism of one."

From all which we infer, that artists with two colors only are not the men to paint these historical scenes. All was not right on one side, nor all wrong on the other ; and though it is undeniably true that the welfare of England and the human race required that Charles should be resisted, it is not so sure that the resistance was always made in the best way or the right spirit, nor that equal advantages might not have been gained without such wild waste of blood. That Hampden and Vane were great and single-hearted men no one can question ; but to believe that all who acted with them were disinterested and true requires great faith in human nature. Many of those who started with a conscience threw it overboard when they had left the shore ; and some were exceedingly successful in gaining heights and honors which men do not often reach without some effort of their own. While, therefore, our sympathies naturally take side with those who fought the battles of the free, and we admire the matchless self-devotion of some, to us they are not all heroes, nor do we think it necessary to defend and exalt in the mass all the men and measures of their party. We cannot but feel a respectful tenderness for men like Falkland, who resisted the king's tyranny when he was in power, but sacrificed all for him when he seemed unjustly trodden down. And we can easily see how one who began with sincere patriotism, like Cromwell, might unconsciously identify his country's interests with his own, persuading himself that it was necessary for him to take the reins, when no other hand could hold them. For, if the divine right which his ability gave is so clear to a writer of the present day, much clearer must it have been to one personally interested as he was. Sincerity is consistent with large measures of self-delusion. But that he walked

through life with an open heart, forgetful of self, and living only for God and duty, as the highest religious principle would imply, his best contemporaries did not credit, and we shall excuse ourselves from believing. We would not class him with those heroes of whom plain John Foster said, "It had been well for the world, if they had all been hanged together in a string"; nor do we suppose that freedom will ever number him with her disinterested prophets and martyrs.

As soon as the work of civil war began in earnest, such a man as Cromwell could not fail to make himself felt, if not understood. At first, exasperated as the parties were, there was some natural reluctance to turn violent hands against each other; old associations of brotherhood and loyalty required time to break them. For a season, with a traditional deference for the aristocracy, the parliament found generals for its army among the lords; and they, with a natural distrust of the levelling propensities of the republicans, kept an eye to their own order, and, though they fought against their monarch, did not press him with hatred as desperate as if he had never been their king. Cromwell had no idea of "striking soft in battle"; his favorite way of doing things was the shortest and sharpest. The consequence was, that, as his manifest ability set him at once far above them all, he often felt an indignant contempt of the forbearance of Essex and Manchester, and they a distrust of his ambition. He charged Manchester with cowardice and unfaithfulness to his trust; and Manchester declared that Cromwell had said to him, — "My lord, if you will stick firm to honest men, you shall find yourself at the head of an army that shall give the law to king and parliament." These words are so much in harmony with the course which he pursued, and the army so soon took the stand proposed, against both parliament and king, that it might have been well to make some attempt to disprove them. Not so thinks Mr. Carlyle. He passes them over in silence; a convenient way to dispose of them, no doubt, — greatly simplifying the work of the historian, but not satisfactory to all.

We are told by Mrs. Hutchinson, that her high-minded husband discerned this same purpose in Cromwell, and told him plainly how much it would darken all his glory, "if he should be guilty of what he gave the world just cause to suspect, and become a slave to his own ambition." The effect

of it was, that Cromwell "made mightier professions of a sincere heart to him," but took special care to "keep him out of the armie" ever after. Thus it seems that Manchester and the Presbyterians were not the only persons who suspected him. The best man of the day, whose disinterested sagacity it would be foolish to question, did not regard his words as the surest manifestation of what was in his heart. Still, as a military chief, no one could stand either at his side or before him; honest or not, he was too great to be put down. Take his letters and speeches as full evidence, and no man's purposes could be purer; but take men's own word for their saintship, and we should find no sinners anywhere to explain the existence of a world of sin.

One thing, however, there was which aided his energy to give success to his enterprises, and to strike his enemies with dismay. It was his unshrinking firmness in doing the work of blood. In other men there were some natural relentings, particularly when they saw their countrymen hewed down and mangled before them; but we cannot see the point in his history, from first to last, where a consideration of this kind had power within him. In the eyes of some this may be his glory; we cannot say that it is so in ours. He writes to a friend, Colonel Walton, to inform him of the death of his son in battle, saying that he was a gallant and gracious young man, and full of comfort in his dying hours. Only one thing appeared to disturb the serenity of his departure; and that was, "that God had not suffered him any more to be the executioner of his enemies." Cromwell remarks of him, that he was "a precious young man, fit for God," and would doubtless be a glorious saint in heaven. It may be the entire want of the heroics in our nature; but this does not strike us as just the spirit of the gospel, nor, till thus advised, should we have conceived that it was of precisely such material that saints in heaven are made. But if such is the beauty of holiness, Cromwell had unquestionably made his own election sure. Sir Philip Warwick described his first appearing in parliament; "his linen plain and not very clean; his hat without a hatband; his countenance swoln and reddish; his voice sharp and untunable, and his eloquence full of fervor"; adding to the picture, "a speck or two of blood on his little band, which was not much larger than his collar." On that occasion, the blood was doubtless

his own ; but in later days, those specks had so much enlarged and multiplied with the blood of others, that the artist of two colors is at his wits' end how to represent him in white raiment, as his theory requires him to do. No colorless chiar' oscuro will answer in the clear daylight of history. The horrible carnage of Drogheda or Tredagh refuses to be washed out, or painted with white lead ; and yet the artist has determined that white the garment shall be.

It is quite an original effort by which Mr. Carlyle defends these passages in the life of his hero. No one, by the way, imagines that he shed blood for his own pleasure ; he is simply charged with being somewhat savage in the battle, though not so at other times. And his present biographer defends him, not by showing that the slaughter was necessary as a warning, but by flying in the face of the humanity of the present day, describing it as a hypocritical parade of tenderness, and counting it glory to Cromwell that no touch of a similar affection ever visited his heart. "In Oliver's time," he says, "there was still belief in the judgments of God ; in Oliver's time, there was yet no distracted jargon of 'abolishing capital punishments,' of Jean-Jacques philanthropy, and universal rose-water, in this world still so full of sin." Cromwell he describes as "an armed soldier, solemnly conscious to himself that he is the soldier of God the just" ; "doing God's judgments on the enemies of God."

Now there is distracted jargon in this world, no doubt ; but we must say, that we have seen no specimen of it elsewhere that quite comes up to this ; and, as to the abolition of capital punishment which is far from the worst thing that good men have undertaken, we do not know who are so much personally interested to do it away as those who propose to order their lives by the light of such doctrine as this. The writer seems to be aware, that, in spite of all he can say, the smell of rose-water will be esteemed more refreshing than the stench of scaffolds, battle-fields, and similar flower-beds of death. This moves him to language less courtly and composed than a sage might be expected to employ. "To a poor, slumberous, canting age, mumbling to itself everywhere, peace, peace, when there is no peace, such a phenomenon as Oliver, in Ireland or elsewhere, is not the most recognizable in its meanings." "Here is a man whose word represents a thing." Of this there can be

no doubt ; but it is such a thing as many a little knave will swing for, before the humane can reach the result which they have at heart ; while many a wholesale dealer in the same article, infinitely more deserving of such exaltation, will find trumpeters ready to crack their cheeks in his praise, as one who “has God’s truth in the heart of him,” and is guided in all his paths by the religion of peace and love.

But while we cannot approve this way of clearing individuals by flying in the face of humanity itself, — and nothing can be worse than the style of a half prophet, half merry-andrew, in which this writer deals with subjects of the most serious concern to mankind, — we do not mean to accuse Cromwell of habitual cruelty, but only to say that there was nothing which prevented his marching bloodshod to the accomplishment of his object, whatever it might be. In his usual habits of thought and action, he was highminded and generous, if not humane ; fierce as was his use of victory, he was rigid in suppressing the violence of his soldiers as soon as their work was done. His word to an enemy might be implicitly trusted ; and many less vigorous chiefs would be far less merciful to a fallen foe. There was no stain of avarice or ordinary meanness resting on his name. Without the accomplishments, he had much of the open manliness, of Cæsar ; and this, perhaps, as much as his wonderful ability, gave him his ascendancy over others, and made it hard to believe, in this case as in that of the Roman, that one so generous in the common relations of life could have any thing selfish in his public aims and endeavours. But unfortunately, this domestic and social excellence is no sure pledge for civil patriotism ; men, even great men, are lifted from the ground by the applause which follows their services, and easily believe the flattering assurance, that they are essential to their country.

Nothing could be more uniformly successful than Cromwell’s military career ; and though the sphere was comparatively small, even trifling, when compared with the vast campaigns of modern days, and though there were no such depressing difficulties in his way as it was the glory of Washington to encounter, still, he gave an impression of rapid thought, of quick decision, of inflexible firmness, and fiery action, such as must have made him first in any walk of life, however wide, which he was ordained to tread. It was

not necessary to suppose that he acted the constant hypocrite ; and from this charge, were it required, Carlyle's work would successfully defend him. Perhaps this idea has been quite too much associated with Cromwell ; that he wore his religion as an iron mask, to conceal his real expression at all times, and from every eye. It is well that such unfriendly imaginations should be done away. The truth with respect to him is, that his sincerity, at first unquestionable, and never wholly lost, shaded off into self-delusion ; his ambition succeeded in blinding his conscience to a certain degree ; and thus he was led to impose on others, where it was essential to his success. Still, he retained many and great virtues, and in most of his relations could afford to keep an open heart. He was not to be compared to the deliverer of his country, who quietly gave up his power when that work was done ; and at the same time, he is not to be degraded to the common level of wholly selfish and unprincipled usurpers.

When Cromwell rose into such overshadowing greatness that every eye could see the decisive influence which he would exert in all public affairs, the two great factions which divided the nation, Presbyterians and Independents, began to look to his course as their chief concern. That tolerant spirit, which, unlike most other religionists, he maintained from first to last, and which was too much in harmony with his high nature to be ascribed to interest or design, inclined him to favor the latter party, who were a confused mass, representing all manner of doctrines and opinions, and each profoundly interested to prevent the ascendancy of any single sect except their own. The city of London was with the Presbyterians, and the Scotch lent them their influence, if not their action ; but the army, which was by this time the only real House of Commons, were fierce on the other side. Mr. Carlyle says, — “ Modern readers ought to believe that there was a real impulse of heavenly faith at work in this controversy ; that on both sides, especially the army's side, here lay the central element of all.” To some extent, this is true ; but other elements were there, working still harder. No doubt, each side believed that the service of heaven and the public welfare required the downfall of their opposers. It is the same holy alliance of conscience and passion which appears in the proceedings of every religious party. The

Presbyterians hated and feared the victorious army, and resolved, if possible, to disband it ; while the army, having tasted the sweets of power, had no idea of resigning its privileges and blessings to civil hands.

And now, to some, Cromwell, the idol of the soldiers, appears like a cat near a rat-hole, quietly waiting his time ; to others, he seems piously and prayerfully watching, in that position, for the order of Providence to succeed. To Ludlow, the republican, he whispered something of the army pulling out the leaders of the House by the ears ; which seems, to the uninitiated, not precisely the course that Providence is accustomed to employ, and sounds like a foreshadowing of that operation which he afterwards executed with so much success. It would not appear from this work, that he had any thing to do with the famous self-denying ordinance which was intended to remove distasteful officers from the army, and therefore provided that no member of the House should hold any military or civil station. Carlyle, on what authority he does not say, avers that one Zouch Tate proposed it. Clarendon states that Cromwell, together with Vane, was the author of the measure, and gives the substance of his speech on that occasion. It is not probable that he intended at the time to throw out others and retain his own command. This was not like him ; but it was felt that his services were indispensable ; and when Fairfax solicited that the act should be suspended in his favor, he was too easily persuaded that it was necessary for himself to do what he had maintained should be forbidden to all without exception ; thus making self-denial a very easy effort, when, by merely enforcing it on others, without submitting to it himself, the virtue brought its own reward.

The effect of thus remodelling the army was to make its power absolute and unquestioned, with Cromwell for its heart and head. Fairfax, it is true, was in name the commander ; but he had no more the control than the figure-head on the vessel, to determine its course through the sea. At times, the Presbyterian party rose in momentary strength ; the Scots, who now perceived, that, by surrendering the king to the English, they had only established a stronger despotism, sent an army, under the Duke of Hamilton, to restore him ; while the Presbyterians in England, who were then the party of the constitution, endeavoured to make terms

with the royal prisoner, lest a mightier sovereign should rise and reign in his stead. The republicans, stronger in spirit than in number, of course could not gain their point, and might endanger their necks, by the king's restoration. They therefore could not act with the Presbyterians, and necessarily took sides with the army, hoping that the free English spirit, or some act of Providence, would prevent the despotism to which all was apparently tending. In the army, a party of Levellers rose, a kind of Chartists, who could not well conceive why no gain should come to the oppressed and humble, and were wholly at a loss to know how a dictator differed from a king. Historians speak of them with some contempt, because Cromwell, by his sharp remedies, so easily put them down; and Mr. Carlyle has treated their memory with a sort of buffoonery which is far more luxurious to himself than enlightening to his readers, or appropriate to the matter in hand. But Mrs. Hutchinson speaks of them as simple-hearted and earnest men, who asked nothing more than the rights which they had shed their blood to secure. A deputation of their number waited on Cromwell, when he was leaving England for the North to encounter Hamilton, and returned greatly delighted with the professions he had made them, till they ascertained that a coachful of Presbyterians, who came directly after them, had received similar assurances and returned with equal delight. Mr. Carlyle makes no mention of these occasions when the ever single-hearted man gave impressions not very consistent with each other. It is because he relies on Cromwell himself as his chief authority, and he, strange as it may seem, did not think it needful to record them.

Of these various parties, the Presbyterian was the only one which had much efficient strength; and all their movements were paralyzed by the difficulty of making arrangements with the king, and the feeling, that, if made, they could never trust him. Having, therefore, no confidence of accomplishing their ends, there was no enthusiasm in their numbers; and if they, at any time, manifested a high spirit, the advance of the army to London was enough to put it down. All depended on the course of the army, and that was determined by its chief. What his intentions were with respect to the king and country it is not easy to tell. He was not present when Pride drove out the members of parliament who had

voted to consider the terms offered by the king ; but in a letter, he ascribed the step to the immediate inspiration of the Almighty. Ludlow, the republican, and Hollis, the Presbyterian, who agree in nothing else, both state that Cromwell would have taken part with the king, if he could have carried the army with him. There is reason to suppose that his feeling inclined him in that direction ; certainly there was no good will then existing between him and the party of the Commonwealth. He probably intended to govern himself by " the everlasting laws " by which the present writer legalizes all his proceedings ; laws which are commonly interpreted at the pleasure of him who consults them ; and which are apt to become, as Cromwell said of the laws of England, " a tortuous, ungodly jingle," when everlasting folly inclines its ear to the commentary which infinite ambition gives.

" Wooden Ludlow," as this writer calls him, probably because he was so dull as to die in exile and want because of his convictions, gives an account of a curious interview with Cromwell, who wished to prevail on him to go to Ireland, and, after combating his objections, " talked for almost an hour on the hundred and tenth Psalm " ; whereat Mr. Carlyle lifts up his hands, and breaks forth in ecstasy, — " It is great ! it is tragic ! it is a thing that should strike us dumb ! " Truly, if he believed that talking by the hour about Melchizedek is such a glorious proof of godliness, he is perfectly welcome to his own spiritual standard. He can find sufficient evidence of the kind, that " there was a man practising this world's mean affairs with a heart filled with the idea of the Highest. Bathed in the eternal splendors, it is so he walks this dim earth." He must not wonder, if others, less transported, regard it as an intimation that Cromwell had some small desire to be bathed in temporal splendors too, and therefore was willing to appear as " a God-intoxicated man " to those hearts of oak which were likely to resist him. But however this may be, we apprehend that Mr. Carlyle himself, with all his enthusiasm, had he been a hearer on such an occasion, would have been seen in full retreat before the homily was done, and " doers of the word " would have risen to a height in his estimation which they evidently have not now.

The army, having reduced the parliament to a ragged remnant, which was either in full sympathy with it or entirely subservient to its will, began to consider how the king should

be disposed of ; and since, should he live, he might possibly be restored to his throne, it seemed to be their only security that he should die. Cromwell has written nothing in relation to this subject ; his opinions and feelings must be inferred from our impressions of his character ; and while there is no proof that he sought the king's life, or that, except in the excitement of the battle, he had any taste for shedding blood, he must have been aware that such an act would leave him the first man in England, " with power too great to keep or to resign." He must have been far more exalted above other mortals than we believe him to have been, if such a prospect had no influence on his views and feelings. It is not probable that he could have saved the life of Charles, had he been so disposed. Fairfax afterwards said, that, if any of the regicides deserved to suffer, it was he himself, who, being in command of the army, might have saved the king. But every one knows that he would have done it, had he been able ; and he was commander only in name, Cromwell having the real authority. And even Cromwell's influence, great as it was, would probably have been overthrown at that time by any attempt to resist the army's will. But it was not a thing which sat very heavy on his heart ; there are some very pleasant scenes on record, as having taken place when the subject was talked over in their councils, such as flinging a cushion in sport at Ludlow's head ; which may have some deep meaning, " unrecognizable by the present age," but to our dim vision appears rather more funny than decorous at such a time. Still, we speak diffidently, having had no means of knowing how magistrates, when life is in question, disport themselves before acts of doom. In the active proceedings of the trial Cromwell took no part except to approve them. Nothing is added to this part of his history by the writer of this work, who despatches the whole subject in few words, looking on it as an execution of the sentence denounced against tyranny by the " everlasting laws," and throwing up his hat with exultation at the unflinching manner in which the work was done. He says, " This action of the English regicides did in effect strike a damp like death through the heart of Flunkeyism universally in this world. Whereof Flunkeyism, Cant, Cloth-worship, or whatever ugly name it have, has gone about incurably sick ever since." As to Flunkeyism we cannot speak, having no acquaintance in that

direction ; but that Cant is alive, and enjoying the blessing of perfect health, we may find proof without travelling far ; for, though the singing of one age and sect may lose its charm for others, each has a new incantation, with a different pitch and tune, which it harps upon, delighted with its own performance, while the hearers are ready to perish with disgust and weariness of the song.

Mr. Carlyle says little of the death of Charles, and that little has no interest or value, though that event is the central point of the action of the times, and his hero's history is necessarily connected with it, so as to make it desirable that his course in relation to it should be clearly known. The mind even of the Independents was by no means unanimous in its favor. Scarcely one half of the commissioners appointed to sit in judgment could be induced to take their places ; some, who did, subscribed the sentence with a feeling of remorse and shame ; and Sir Henry Vane, who seems to us to hold the place which Carlyle would assign to Cromwell, of a conscientious and disinterested great man, utterly condemned and disowned the whole proceeding, nor would he afterwards join the council of state till the part of the oath which approved this act was altered. There are charges against Cromwell, not of intrigue, but of levity amounting to coldheartedness, on this occasion, which it might have been well to answer or explain ; but this writer disposes of them in his usual manner, by saying nothing about them, thinking it sufficient refutation, doubtless, that Cromwell in his own writings has not set them down.

The general feeling with respect to this memorable execution has passed through various changes in modern times. For years, the royal sufferer was regarded as a martyr, inspiring deep sympathy in many who condemned his oppression and thought him guilty of many public crimes. When the influence of Hume declined, this death was regarded as an honorable deed, and a useful and much needed warning. But now, when, as this writer perhaps would phrase it, the age of sulphuric acid is giving place to the rose-water dispensation, — a change not much to be deplored, — they who speak in the spirit of the English law will say with Hallam, that they “ cannot perceive what there was in the imagined solemnity of this proceeding, in that insolent mockery of all the forms of justice, accompanied by all unfairness and inhuman-

ity in its circumstances, which can alleviate the guilt of the transaction ; and if it be alleged, that many of the regicides were firmly persuaded in their consciences of the right and duty of condemning the king, we may surely remember that private murderers have often had the same apology." They who regard these subjects in the light of expediency are wholly at a loss to discover what good this act has done. The divine right of kings and the sacredness of the royal person were dreams which had already passed away. This act was not necessary, nor did it serve to dispel them ; on the contrary, the brave and gentle bearing of the king in those awful hours tended to make men forget the faults of his public life, and awakened a general sympathy for him which otherwise he could never have secured. In the light of policy, it was a mistake ; tried by the law of justice, it was a transgression ; and humanity laments it as a needless work of blood. Mr. Carlyle, however, is almost beside himself with exultation, as it comes up before him ; and his solitary shout of triumph is echoed by no answering voice. So far from joining in his untimely raptures, the friends of their race look forward with earnest waiting to the day, when death shall cease to be the means of securing the public welfare, when neither kings nor people shall suffer violence to maintain the right or resist the wrong, and when Christianity shall protect life with such commanding power, that no one in the wide world shall lose it, except by the act of God.

Cromwell was the first president of the council of state to which the executive authority, though really residing in the army, was nominally intrusted ; and Sir Henry Vane engaged the services of Milton (Mr. John) as secretary for the foreign languages to that body. But there was other work for the general to do, and his place at the head of the board was soon filled by Bradshaw. It was necessary that a force should proceed at once to Ireland, and there was but one who could be thought of as its chief. Meantime, the spirit of insubordination had risen in the army ; as the soldiers had governed all others, some of them could not well understand why others should govern them. They had ideas about England's " new chains," and desires to secure the enjoyment of some of those blessings for which they had fought, which boded no good to the cause of discipline ; and the more so, as their object was only to act over, on a smaller scale, what

they had just been doing before with the consent and approbation of the country. But the power was now in mightier hands ; and the sudden overthrow of all the mutineers, and the execution of some, showed them the difference between the civil sovereign and the military chief. Having trodden out the spark of disaffection with his iron heel, he proceeded with his troops to Ireland, where a new series of triumphs awaited him, and his first augury of success was a victory which the garrison of Dublin just before his arrival had gained over the Marquis of Ormond. His purpose was to move toward Munster ; but part of Ormond's army having garrisoned Tredagh, now called Drogheda, he took that place by storm. Though at first repulsed, he rallied his men in person, and their new assault succeeded. Then followed the carnage to which we have alluded ; no quarter was given ; of several thousand, not thirty, as he informs us, escaped with life. Ludlow says that the slaughter continued two days without intermission ; Cromwell spoke of it with singular satisfaction, as likely " to save much effusion of blood."

Mr. Carlyle ingeniously suggests, as a peace-offering to his Irish readers, that most of those who suffered at Tredagh were English soldiers. This was well known to Cromwell ; but pleasant as the assurance may be to the natives of the Green Isle, we are not particularly informed what justice there was in butchering his own countrymen as a retribution for Irish crimes. The effect of these mercies, as he calls them, was, as well it might be, to spread the terror of his name throughout that unhappy land. Wexford, though defended by a considerable force, was taken and plundered. He says, " The soldiers got a very good booty in this place ; and had not they had opportunity to carry their goods over the river whilst we besieged it, it would have been much more ; I could have wished, for their own good, and the good of the garrison, they had been more moderate " ; a wish, however, as Mr. Carlyle, who sees daylight through the bad grammar, informs us, not applying to the soldiers, but rather to the misguided people of the town. Ross fell next ; Cork and Youghal were surrendered to him ; one fortified place after another fell. He speaks of Ormond's " kurisees," which this writer takes to be a nickname for unpopular soldiers ; but it probably was his way of spelling the word *cuirassiers*, spelling as well as grammar being a luxury by no

means common at that day. In less than half a year, he had placed Ireland beyond the possibility of all future rising or resistance, having exacted a fearful penalty for the massacres which the Protestants had suffered before. The miserable inhabitants were permitted to enlist in foreign service ; French and Spanish officers transported forty-five thousand ; nearly half as many were sold into foreign bondage ; and so much was the island desolated, that Cromwell invited the people of New England to go over and tenant the land which his arms had subdued. They, however, declined his civilities ; and we have never heard that they or their descendants found reason to repent their choice.

When Ireland had no farther need of his active services, Cromwell left Ireton in charge of the work that remained to be done there, and he himself repaired to Scotland, where Charles the Second was, with many wry faces, adopting the Covenant, in hope of gaining the Presbyterian interest to his side ; an ill-assorted union certainly, in which there could be no great amount of heart or confidence on either side, and where, indeed, all hope was founded more on the general hatred to Cromwell and the parliament than on any real faith in the dispositions of the youthful king. This business was not to be managed precisely like that in Ireland ; long dissertations and preachings were necessary, as well as steel-blades and cannon-balls ; he was just the man to deal in either article ; and, after pressing the service on Fairfax, who flatly refused it, he set forth, prepared to administer either remedy, or both, as the case might be. A declaration was sent forward “to all that are Saints and Partakers of the Faith of God’s Elect in Scotland,” and a proclamation also for the people, though there must have been exceedingly few who could have felt that the former was not addressed to them. Lesley, who commanded the Scotch, probably had no great confidence in the strength and discipline of his army, and therefore kept safe in his strong positions, while a bloodless paper war was carried on between the heads of the two parties. Since Lesley would not fight, and the paper missiles did not prove fatal, Cromwell found it necessary to fall back upon Dunbar, where his ships and provisions lay ; but in case of disaster at that place, there was no retreat for his army. Had the Scotch been content to pursue their former policy, it must have gone hard with the English ; but, placing confidence in their superi-

ority of numbers, they thought it more creditable to do something to help forward the victory, and, in changing their position, gave Cromwell the opportunity which he wanted, to make a vigorous charge. The success of the movement was complete ; after a brave resistance of the Highlanders, the Scotch forces fled, losing more in killed and prisoners than all the English army numbered before the battle began. More efficient this than the letters for the Edinburgh clergy which fill Mr. Carlyle, who has published and may possibly have read them, with such wildness of delight. "They are coruscations," he says, "terrible as lightning, and beautiful as lightning, from the innermost temple of the human soul." But even if bright as that to which he compares them, they are of considerably longer duration ; and since the day of much speaking is passed, they will not, except in those possessed with the heroics, awaken much interest now.

Acceptable as the victory of Dunbar was to Cromwell, it appears to have been hardly less so to Charles ; for he hated and feared the Presbyterians, who were willing to have a king, but not a master, and who, as he believed, would have imprisoned him if their army had succeeded. The Scotch employed themselves in gaining recruits, and Cromwell in reducing their fortified places, as soon as a dangerous illness which afflicted him would allow. When he was able to take the field, he so planted his forces as to cut off the king's supplies, which induced Charles, or rather his army, to march directly into England, hoping that some interest or feeling would rise up to welcome him there. But it happened to him as to his descendant in 1745. The movement, indeed, struck terror into the hearts of the parliament, and great efforts were made to levy forces to resist him ; but none, except the Earl of Derby, came forward to join his standard. Cromwell was following hard after him, and when at last he made a stand at Worcester, it was with very little hope of success, hemmed in, as he was, with a far larger army, under the greatest general of the day. The struggle was a fierce and desperate one ; but, as usual, Cromwell's victory was decisive, and the party of the Stuarts was put down in England for many a day. This was the last of Cromwell's battles ; ending a career in which he had manifested force of character, firmness of purpose, and swift energy of action, and which, though his campaigns were comparatively few and small, placed him among

the foremost of those whom the world calls great ; leaving a military character, too, which, ferocious as he was in the heat of the battle, was, on the whole, not shaded with war's worst excesses. He was honorable in his dealings with his enemies, not harsh in his treatment of the fallen, and, except in times of fierce excitement, none charged him with a thirst of blood.

But the question arises, whether, in his martial career, any proof can be found of rising ambition, which would betray itself by a divergence from that straight path of duty in which it was his boast to tread. And for such testimony it is customary to look to others rather than to the interested party ; since, however open-hearted, there is such a thing as self-delusion, and men are not always conscious of that departure from the right which is clear to other eyes. The only decided evidence of this kind is found in the charges made against him by Huntington, his major of horse, who accused him before the House of Lords. He deposed, that Cromwell had instigated the army to disobey the parliament, at the same time that he was flattering the king with false professions ; that he had also maintained, that it was lawful to fight knaves with their own weapons, and to pass through any forms of government for attaining his ends. This, to be sure, savored more of Jesuitism than ambition ; but Huntington declares that Cromwell had said he did not know why he himself was not as fit to govern England as other men. Milton discredits this testimony, by saying that Huntington afterwards humbled himself to Cromwell, and declared that the Presbyterians urged him on, which was doubtless the fact ; but the testimony may have been true nevertheless. Had it not been, the charges would have been heavier ; and we may infer as much from Cromwell's afterwards employing Huntington. He was never revengeful, and could pardon an unsuccessful attempt to injure him ; but he would never have given a commission to a perjured liar.

As to overt acts of ambition, Huntington does not prove much ; but what he says of Cromwell's theory of morals derives some support from Mrs. Hutchinson, whose testimony cannot well be doubted. She says, that the government of one of four towns was offered to her husband, who chose that of Hull, thinking that nothing was proposed to him that could not properly be accepted. Cromwell desired him to meet a

committee to confer about the matter ; and on that occasion a malicious charge was brought against Overton, who was then the governor, one of those furious sectarians, like Harrison, whom it was so hard to control. Overton sent in a clear and satisfactory defence ; but most of the committee were his enemies, and were proceeding to depose him, when Hutchinson, who was the very soul of honor, declared that the charge was evidently false, and if Overton was unjustly ruined, he could not take advantage of his fall. “ Whereupon Cromwell drew him aside, and askt him what he meant, to contend so to keepe in that governor. The Colonell told him, because he saw nothing proved against him worthy of his being ejected. ‘ But,’ sayd Cromwell, ‘ wee like him not.’ Then sayd the Colonell, ‘ Doe it on that account, then, and blemish not a man that is innocent on false accusations, because you like him not.’ ‘ But,’ sayd Cromwell, ‘ wee would have him out, because the government is designed for you, and except you put him out, you cannot have the place.’ ” Hutchinson then told Cromwell, that he would never prosper by such means, and going back to the table, he undertook the defence of the injured governor with so much determination, that his enemies were ashamed to persist in their intended wrong. But Mrs. Hutchinson says Cromwell resented this proceeding, and opposed all future attempts of the friends of her husband to give him the station which he deserved. “ The Colonell forebore not to tell him what was suspected of his ambition, what dissimulations of his were remarked, and how dishonorable to the name of God and the profession of religion, and destructive to the most glorious cause, and dangerous to overthrow all our triumphs, these things which were suspected of him would be, if true. He would seem to receive these cautions and admonitions as the greatest demonstrations of friendship, that could be made, and embrace the Colonell in his armes, and make serious lying professions to him, and often enquire men’s opinions concerning him, which the Colonell never forebore to tell him plainly ; although he knew he resented it not as he made shew, yett it pleased him so to discharge his own thoughts.”

It is difficult to resist the conclusion which was formed in that day by high and honorable men who were on his own side, that his usual straightforward manliness of character was melting away under the influence of selfish ambition. Mr.

Carlyle, in his towering heroics, gives no heed to sublunary intimations like this ; with the instinct of our wild geese in their migrations, which, though they fly low by night, mount in the day-time to the upper regions of the air, where no fowler's aim can reach them, he cares no more than they for those metes and bounds which are measured and marked by the surveyor with his compass and chain as he traverses the landscape below. And yet it is undeniable that facts require some attention ; the historian is bound to look into and explain them ; for these bird's-eye views, though entertaining to readers, and happy and self-glorifying to him who takes them, are not very favorable to a right understanding of the characters and ways of men.

In certain conversations, respecting the establishment of a new authority, which Whitelocke has recorded, and in which Cromwell bore a part not very decided, but sufficiently characteristic of his purpose at the time, he leans in favor of the monarchical form. In the first of them, which was the more deliberate and public, Desborough and Whalley express themselves in favor of a republic ; St. John and the other lawyers, in favor of a mixed monarchy. Cromwell remarks, that, " if it may be done with safety to their rights as Englishmen, a settlement with somewhat of monarchical power in it will be very effectual." But Widdrington suggested, that the Duke of Gloucester was unobjectionable as a sovereign from his tender age, having never taken part against the people, though of the royal line, and therefore well suited for a constitutional king. This would not do, and Cromwell broke up the meeting without any satisfactory result. About a year after, he held a confidential discourse with Whitelocke alone, complaining of the chief officers of the army and the leaders of parliament as factious and unfaithful men. Whitelocke admitted this in part, but said, that, after they had exercised so much of the sovereign power, it would be no easy matter to restrain them. " What," said Cromwell, " if a man should take upon him to be king ?" Whitelocke answered, that the remedy would be worse than the disease. Cromwell asked him why he thought so, when the people had a reverence for the office which would enable the incumbent to control the extravagances of those in power. Whitelocke replied, that, after the people had become convinced that a republic was better than a monarchy, his assumption of that office would change the

state of affairs. Being urged by Cromwell to proceed, he advised a private treaty with the exiled king, by which he might secure himself and his friends, provide for his family, and enforce what restraints he thought necessary on the royal power. Cromwell said that such a step would require great consideration ; then parted from him in some displeasure, and consulted him but little afterwards for several years. This latter conversation, for obvious reasons, Mr. Carlyle does not think it necessary to give ; but he avenges himself on Whitelocke by speaking of "terrene, fat minds," "fat, drowsy pedantry," and such like savory meat as his custom is to dispense to those who do not please him ; all which is sufficiently jocose, but does not turn aside the force of the evidence, which, if true and not wholly without meaning, certainly wears the aspect of ambition. Whitelocke was no fool, and no one ever charged him with enmity to Cromwell ; but when he tells what it is difficult to reconcile with perfect heroism and heavenly-mindedness, he becomes "dull Bulstrode," an "oleaginous" man ; in order, unquestionably, that these brilliant fireworks of humor may divert the reader's attention from that record which the untimely Bulstrode should never have set down.

It would be difficult to give any other explanation of Cromwell's dissolving the parliament by violence, save what can be found in his ambition ; for that body, which owed its existence to the army, had been the faithful executor of its will. But as soon as the necessity for arms was over, and an effort was likely to be made to disband the forces and establish a more settled government, the soldiery, who had so long enjoyed the sweets of dictation, were not disposed to surrender it to other hands. A reform bill had been introduced by Sir Henry Vane, providing for a new parliament and more equal representation ; for this offence, and his not worshipping the Nebuchadnezzar's image which Mr. Carlyle has set up, he is here described as, "on the whole, rather a thin man," "of light fibre," "an amiable, devoutly zealous, very pretty man" ; and much more in the same key, intended as a portrait of one who was as much above Cromwell in moral and intellectual accomplishments, as Cromwell was before him in the art of war. In the same way did this writer, in his novel called the French Revolution, visit on Lafayette the iniquity of being honest, generous, and manly, and thus of

casting a shadow on the brazen front of his idol, Mirabeau ; all which conveys a clear impression of the taste and fancy of the writer, with a very sparing infusion of historical truth. The parliament, though irregular in its existence and its action, had conducted itself with great energy in its latest days ; the war with the Dutch had been carried on with success and glory, under the management of Vane, the man of "split hairs," as he is here so wittily called ; the resources of the country were in a flourishing way ; they were preparing to relieve the burdens of the people by dismissing unnecessary soldiers ; no reason of patriotism or principle could be given for dissolving the assembly before they had provided a legislative body to succeed them ; and there are few who believe that such reasons dictated the measure. It was true that the parliament had often abused its power ; but in this case, as is not unusual in this world, the complaint and the revenge came not from the sufferers, but from those who were equally guilty.

On the whole, it is difficult for any except a determined adorer of Cromwell to represent him in garments entirely white. Neither is black the appropriate color ; perhaps the proper hue would be something approaching that of the gray stockings in which he shone forth on the day when he gave leave to the parliament to withdraw from the house, and locked the door behind them. His bearing on that occasion is sufficiently well known ; Napoleon, almost in our own day, has given an imitation of it, — not so pious certainly, but, in all other respects, about as good as new. Both of them, at the time, were in a state of agitated excitement, which was very unlike Cromwell's usual stern composure, and served to indicate, what undoubtedly was true, that he had some suspicions of the part he was acting ; whether some taint of selfishness did not enter and deprave his zeal for his country's welfare. He began his speech at that time by praising the parliament at great length for their patriotic deeds ; then, changing his key, went on to upbraid them, evidently working himself into a passion in order to gather courage for the task which he had to do. Finding himself opposed, he reached the necessary degree of excitement, and, after some personal vituperation of different members, in which he could indulge to his heart's content, supported as he was by his soldiers, and saying something to Sir Henry

Vane, which showed that he would have justified himself to that great man if he could, he drove them impatiently from the room, saying, "I have sought the Lord night and day, that he would rather slay me than put me to this work"; of which we can only say, that whoever is disposed to believe it is perfectly welcome. Not being able to find his justification in ordinary rules of right, he thought it best to declare that he was acting under a divine inspiration. "Perceiving the spirit of God so strong upon me, I would no longer consult with flesh and blood." Mr. Carlyle finds no difficulty in swallowing that solution; but his readers will probably think twice, before they admit that such acts and inspirations are divine. The only reasonable pretence for it was, that the parliament had not done what was expected of it; but this rule, if carried out, would bring all legislative sessions to a close with great expedition; for the same may be said even of our Congress, and of every such body which has assembled since the creation of the world. The act filled England with fear and wonder; the royalists rejoiced to see the plague brought home to the inventors; the republicans looked on with fierce distrust, but could not help themselves; the army were delighted with this assumption of authority, which they regarded as their own; and all the discontented, who were not a few, to whom any change must be for the better, were more or less rejoiced in heart.

As to the assumption of authority on the part of Cromwell, Mr. Carlyle takes it very coolly, thinking it needs no explanation; it was only a visible manifestation of the fact as it existed. He was already the real sovereign; why not, then, conform the outward to the reality, and let him act the king? It is quite obvious that the nation had been engaged rather seriously in resisting this power of individuals; the kingdom had been shaken, and its best blood shed, to keep that authority from gathering in a single hand. The people did not feel as if much was gained by the substitution of Protector Stork for his most sacred majesty King Log, when the helplessness of the latter would have made him the more desirable of the two. They were naturally anxious to find some basis of principle on which the government could rest, and there seemed to be none possible, except the acknowledgment that the people were their own masters. But Mr. Carlyle has no hesitation in putting forth what Paley

calls "the divine right of kings and constables" as a sufficient basis of authority. With him, the only question is, "whether there is any King, Könning, Can-ning, or supremely Able-Man, to take charge of these conflicting and colliding elements"; — words, brave words, which his readers may chance to have seen before. Whoever, then, feels himself to be that supremely able man, in other words, whoever *can*, has nothing to do but to come forward, asking and answering no questions, and take that place at the head of the nation to which he is entitled; and whoso demands his reason for so doing shall indubitably be put to death.

But unhappily, there are some in this world, men of action as well as writers, who think of themselves, not soberly, but more highly than they ought to think; they are quite as likely to thrust themselves forward as others who have better claims; so that the question, who is the supremely able man, can only be determined by experiment; the usual mode of trial involves a long history of war and suffering, and it is only by bloodshed that the matter is settled at last. The king then steps up his elevation; but after a few years, death ends his sovereignty, and a new scene of strife and wretchedness must determine who shall reign in his stead. Pleasant as all this is in theory, the world has had nearly enough of it; these heroes are less agreeable, and their bearing more difficult to away with, than they appear in the enthusiast's description. Men feel that divine right is not the worse for having a little of human right connected with it, and think it well that kings should be responsible, not only to Heaven, but to those who are to suffer from what they do. However beautiful, then, this theory of divine right, common sense will be likely to reject it; and those who have no better title will enjoy the shades of private life, and go down to the grave as "Cromwells guiltless of their country's blood."

That Cromwell did not feel quite easy in his divine right, or at least feared lest there might be a diviner right to challenge it, appears in his treatment of Vane, which is very unlike his usual manliness, and seems to show that all was not well in his heart. When he dissolved the Long Parliament, since he had not much else to say in reply to Vane's remonstrance, he cried out, "The Lord deliver us from Sir Harry Vane!" But the prayer was not answered, and the

man of "split hairs," as this writer calls him, gave more disquiet to the man of split heads than would have been possible, if the latter had been conscious of not swerving from the line of duty. Cromwell having proclaimed a fast on account of the condition of public affairs, Vane took occasion to write a book in favor of constitutional government, stating the dangers which come from the rule of men, whether as individuals or in numbers, and showing that the only security of freedom must be found in a government of law. He shows how earnest, self-surrendering, and successful the spirit of liberty in the English people, up to that time, had been ; but says, that a system had sprung up, which evidently was not intended for the general good, but for the benefit and exaltation of a few. In order to prevent the threatened danger, he endeavours to lay down some principles on which those engaged in the restoration of liberty should proceed ; foremost among which is the truth, that the Lord is the sole ruler in and over the conscience, and in this province magistrates have nothing to do. He maintains that the people are the source of power, and are bound to restrain it ; and that a constitution, written and accepted by the people, is the only security for the rights of the free. The professed object of Cromwell, in appointing the fast, was, to discover "the Achan who obstructed the settlement of these distracted kingdoms" ; and Vane intimated to him, though in a manner perfectly respectful, that, in his search for the Achan, he need not go far from home. For this publication, he was summoned before the Council, and was required to give good security in bond for five thousand pounds that he would do nothing more to the prejudice of the existing government. To this act of oppression he refused to submit, and put into the hands of Cromwell a paper in which he asserted his own rights and those of his country. For these crimes he was imprisoned in Carisbrooke castle. An attempt was also made to deprive him of his property under the forms of law ; and he was assured, all the while, that, if he would only support the government, the persecution should cease. It is needless to say, that his high spirit refused. This meanness on the part of Cromwell, so unlike his usual conduct, can be accounted for only by unworthy motives ; and, if so, the white robe is not just the one for him to wear.

It was from the conviction that a strong authority was needed, and from the difficulty of uniting in any system of government, that so many acquiesced in Cromwell's usurpation; for such undoubtedly it was. He had no title to govern, except as chief of the army, which is nothing but the right of power. Various were the opinions as to what the government should be. Harrison was for a Sanhedrim, like that of the Jews in our Saviour's time, consisting of seventy members; Lambert was for intrusting supreme authority to a chosen few; but Cromwell saved them the trouble of much reflection. He summoned into a parliament a hundred and twenty-eight men, chosen by his officers, many of them persons of high standing, forming a body known by the name of the Little Parliament, or still better by that of Barebone's. When this body assembled, he addressed them in an interminable speech, in the first hour or two of which he unfolded his reasons for dissolving the Long Parliament, dwelling especially on their assertion, that the liberty of the people depended on the continuance of their own body; as if they intended to be perpetual; when it seems quite obvious that they suspected the purpose of the officers, and the words were simply a reasonable protest against any violent measures to dissolve them. The rest of the discourse is a sort of sermon, like a long subterranean passage, lighted up here and there by little bursts of enthusiasm from Mr. Carlyle, mingled with bitter execrations on those owls who will not see what is not to be seen, and who are too thick-skulled to imagine the wonders which their searching cannot find. He is compelled, however, to make some small concession to poor human nature. "Intelligent readers," he says, "have found intelligibility in this speech of Oliver's"; that is, probably, they can see what he was after; but to himself, "it becomes all glowing with intelligibility, with credibility, with the splendor of genuine veracity and heroic depth and manfulness; and seems in fact, as Oliver's speeches generally do, to a singular degree, the express image of the soul it came from." We cannot say as much of these rapturous plaudits and clapping of hands; they do not seem to us precisely in character with the source from which they proceed; though they are doubtless very sincere, they indicate a temporary hallucination, and remind us of Maffei's account of Loyola, who was so earnest in prayer, that the fervor and

spirituality of his devotions often lifted him several feet from the ground.

The Little Parliament, thus illuminated, proceeded with great vigor, applying themselves to the reformation of abuses of every kind. Much complaint had been made of the inefficiency and slow progress of the law. They abolished the court of chancery, and appointed a commission to prepare a new legal system, in which they admitted but two lawyers. They threatened the tithe system, without providing any support for the clergy in its place. They forbade the clergy's solemnizing marriages, which was made the business of justices of the peace; and in various ways they manifested a hostility to the clerical profession, which brought no little odium on their heads. But it does not readily appear why their history hastened to such an early close. They were to sit for fifteen months, and then to prepare for their successors; but they had not been more than five months in action, before Cromwell began to weary of their exhibition, partly, perhaps, because they always derived their powers from Heaven instead of him. A party of the members were devoted to his service; and they, with the concurrence of the speaker, proposed to dissolve their organization, and to surrender their power into the Lord General's hands, with a sort of confession of their unfitness for the work which they were selected to do. It is quite clear, that Cromwell, who had hailed it as an assembly of the saints, and proclaimed their meeting as the first application of Christianity to public affairs, was very sick of the beauty of such holiness as theirs. Ludlow says, that he frightened the lawyers and clergy that they might cry out against it. Mr. Carlyle says, that he testified much surprise and emotion at the result. We would not intimate that there is any inconsistency between the two authorities, for it is altogether likely that both say true.

The next step was, of course, to make Cromwell in form, what he had long been in substance and reality, the head of the nation and manager of all its affairs; and all historians, even Hume, are ready to allow, that, had he reached that station in the right way, he was the best man to hold its powers and discharge its duties. It is true, that he had been guilty of but few crimes, and not many unworthy actions; but the original sin of his elevation was, that he ascended

to power and maintained himself there by means of the army, so that his government was essentially a military despotism ; — not perhaps in appearance ; so far as words went, the power still resided in parliament ; but these words only served to show, and were meant to conciliate, the republican jealousy of sovereignty ; for certainly, in practice, they were not in the least regarded. Those who, like Mr. Carlyle, justify all Cromwell's proceedings on the ground of his "divine right," have no difficulty in explaining all to their own satisfaction ; but we do not think much of the divine right to do wrong ; and if it was right in Washington to resign his martial trust when his wars were over, it was wrong in Cromwell to assume that the English nation could not govern itself, and needed, not freedom, but a change of masters. It may have been that they were not ready for a representative government. But it does not appear that intelligence, energy, or knowledge of their rights was wanting. At any rate, they had a right to make the experiment, and if they had done so without success, the fault would have been their own. That Cromwell denied them this opportunity, that he rose by the favor of the army, that he encouraged this dangerous element which every friend of liberty labors to put down, are stains on his fair fame which the success and glory of his administration cannot wash away.

But there is also a question, whether the success and glory of his administration, pleasant and flattering to natural pride as they were, resulted in permanent benefit to his country. Though his power was felt and submitted to by other nations, it was not patiently borne by his own. He did not think it wise to govern without parliaments, but he could not have patience with them ; for whenever Englishmen met in council, they were apt to remind him and each other of how much they had done and suffered in order to be free. As they could not be made sufficiently tractable, he was compelled to proceed without them ; and therefore resorted to acts of authority, which made men inquire what was the difference between a Protector and a King ; and, if they must have a master, whether it was not better to have the traditional sovereign, who had learned to submit to restraint, rather than the iron-hearted chieftain, whom nothing could control, — whether the peaceful sceptre was not more tolerable than the sword, which, though it shone magnificently

bright to other nations, was livid and deadly to his own. Perhaps it would be found, if the investigation could be made, that feelings of this kind were paving the way, under all the glory of the time, for the restoration of Charles ; and not only so, but for his restoration without those restraints which were eminently needed, and the want of which made the reign of that chartered libertine a history of infamy and sin. Had Charles the First been compelled to abdicate in favor of his son, and Charles the Second been placed on the throne with the thunders of the civil war still ringing in his ears, before he had been depraved by idleness and worthless companions, England might possibly have had a constitutional sovereign such as governs it now ; or if the name of king had too many distasteful associations with it, the experiment of a republic might have been tried. There, the chief danger of failure comes from military usurpers ; and surely, if Cromwell had laid aside ambition, and endeavoured to guard the interests of the commonwealth, no other star would have ventured to shine in an orbit that crossed his own. But it is useless to imagine what might possibly have been ; what was is now recorded ; and in that registry it appears, that, if usurpers are those who take powers not given by the laws of the land, or by the sense of the people deliberately expressed, but choose rather to rise on the shoulders of armies and reign by the right of the sword, Cromwell assuredly was one ; and yet there never was a usurper who was less selfish in his arms, or who had the good of his country so much at heart.

Miss Edgeworth says, that whoever has reached the height of ambition has nothing to do but to sit still and enjoy the barrenness of the prospect. It was not so with Cromwell ; when he had become the Protector, he found enough to do ; and if he had undertaken to enjoy the recreation of sitting still on the upper circle of the wheel which was revolving under him, he would have been precipitated, not out of office only, but most probably into another world. The republicans, while they submitted to him, were growling in their dens ; for though he himself had, as Mrs. Hutchinson says, " much natural greatnesse, and well became his station," his family, with the exception of Mrs. Fleetwood, conducted themselves with insolent grandeur, " which suited no better with any of them than scarlett on the ape," and thus irritated

the spirit of those who hoped to have seen an end of royal power and pride. The sectarians of various kinds, whom he had favored and fostered, also had their own particular discontent. They had fully expected, that, when Charles was overthrown, the kingdom of heaven would come; and they could not persuade themselves that the reign of Cromwell answered to that description. "Claypoole, who married his daughter, and his son Henry, were two debauched, ungodly cavaliers. Richard was a peasant in his nature, yet gentle and virtuous, but became not greatness. His course was full of sinne and vanity, and the more abominable, because they had not yett quite cast away the name of God, but prophaned it by taking it in vaine." The royalists were by no means delicate as to the manner in which their great enemy should be removed. We find De Retz speaking of the assassination of Mazarin with perfect composure, as a plan in which a Christian prelate need have no hesitation to engage. We know, that, half a century before, Elizabeth proposed to get rid of Mary of Scotland in the same easy and unobjectionable manner, and was disgusted with that "dainty fellow, Paulett," for not choosing to bear a part in her amiable plan. No one could suppose that Charles the Second would be dainty in such matters; indeed, the plan is mentioned without disapprobation even by Clarendon, who seemed to hold unenvied and undisturbed possession of what little conscience the disasters of war and the changes of state had left to his fallen party.

Fearless as Cromwell was, no man likes to be killed, if he can help it; and he had need to look about him. Harrison had refused to acknowledge his government; and the Anabaptists held meetings in which the Protector was denounced as a "perjured villain," with significant prophecies that his reign would not be long; all which was ominous, because he well knew, that, if their words were sharp, their swords were likely to be sharper. Finding that they would not submit in silence, he was obliged to deprive them of their offices in the army, and commit some of them to prison; often lamenting that he was compelled to resort to such measures with men whose good-will he desired to secure. Colonel Hutchinson warned him of a plot against his life which had accidentally come to his knowledge: Cromwell thanked him with great earnestness, saying, "But dear Colonell, why

will you not come in and act with us ? ” to which Hutchinson replied, that he did not like his ways, which all tended to enslave his country. Cromwell answered, that his desire was to confirm the liberties of the people, and ended with saying, “ Well, Colonell, satisfied or dissatisfied, you shall be one of us ; for we can no longer exempt a person so able and faithful from the public service, and you shall be satisfied in all honest things.” It was very painful to him, that, while so many were against him, the disinterested friends of their country did not rally at his side.

The conspiracies of the royalists were more easily detected, being necessarily intrusted to mercenary hands. Some there were, however, who acted under the influence of enthusiasm. Such was Vowel, a schoolmaster, who, though peaceful by profession, had some rough consonants to aid him, and proposed nothing less than to proclaim King Charles and trample the Protector into the dust. But he soon found that Cromwell held the rod in his hands ; and Vowel was blotted out from the alphabet of the living, like “ an unnecessary letter,” not by the laws of prosody, but by a court established by the Protector for the purpose, without the sanction of any law. Sindercomb, who probably was enlightened by Titus’s pamphlet, which laid down “ killing no murder ” as part of the moral law, was busy and inventive in his arts of death, having contrived sundry “ infernal machines ” to assassinate the Protector without detriment to himself. They returned, as usual, to plague the inventor, and he only escaped hanging by putting an end to his own life, saying, as he lay down, “ Well, this is the last time I shall ever go to bed.” It is clear that Cromwell, as he dealt not in rose-water, did not sleep on beds of roses ; and to such a man this care of guarding his own life must have been a most unwelcome part of the business of the day. But the same unfriendly authority which we quoted just now admits his “ personal courage and magnanimity upheld him against all enemies and malcontents,” who could never succeed in their enterprises, though they gave serious disturbance to his repose.

It is striking to see how, under all these annoyances, his strong and steady mind proceeded with his plans and measures to advance the prosperity of the land. The neighbouring realm of Scotland, having no sympathy with England in

habits, manners, or opinions, and always martial in its tastes, had caused much trouble, particularly in dealing with the late king. When it had made itself subject to the law of conquest, it gave an opportunity which he well knew how to improve. He therefore, in the first place, broke down all resistance, giving orders to Monk to proceed with the utmost vigor against all opposers. But though he "thus made himself terrible as a man could be," the severity fell principally on the aristocracy and the clergy, while the people in general, who found themselves less oppressed and in higher estimation than ever before, were well affected to his party. And thus, though the kirk was brought into subjection, and the lips of the clergy were sealed, though the nobles were stripped of their power, and the whole order of things unmercifully torn down and altered, even Clarendon admits that the nation at large was better satisfied with the new than the former system. Yet most of the council, and more than half their judges, were English, while a large army was kept to overawe them, and every thing was conducted without the least respect or indulgence for their national pride.

In Ireland, in consequence of the ferocious spirit which had been manifested there, he established a severer system. All who were proved to have been concerned in the great massacre of '41 were to be put to death; those who had simply borne arms against the parliament were to forfeit their estates, having lands on the moorlands of Connaught assigned them on which to live; professed Papists were to lose one third of their property, while the common people were left unmolested. Rigorous as his measures were, and the manner in which he enforced them, they seemed like mercy to most of the natives of that wretched country, which was held in such contempt, that Harrington thought nothing could be done so much for its advantage as to farm it for an annual rent to the Jews. But the islanders cared little whether they were governed by Jews or Gentiles; from both, they expected, and were sure to find, about the same amount of oppression; so that the common people heard gladly of the change, when they were so situated that any change must be for the better. And the Protector's worst enemies admitted that a general prosperity was enjoyed in the island, such as they never had known before. Unfortunate it was, that the restoration of the worthless Charles to the throne of his

father should have brought to poor Ireland a restoration of its old miseries and wrongs.

But while Scotland and Ireland, having been subdued by his arms, could be thus regulated at his pleasure, it was not so with England, where there were many hard heads, not hostile to him personally, who could not well understand on what foundation his Protectorate stood. Accordingly, there appeared a strong disposition to inquire into the matter in the successive parliaments which were called, though this was by no means the thing for which their services were needed. The first was chosen nearly according to the system which the Long Parliament were maturing when he turned them out of doors ; and great pains were taken to keep it pure by providing that no malignants, as they were termed, should elect or be elected. But after all precautions, some infusion of questioning spirits had found its way in. The Protector went in high state to address them, in a speech of three hours, " every word of which is transparent," according to Mr. Carlyle ; but either the light did not shine clearly through it, or the eyesight of the audience was perverse. They immediately applied themselves to solve the problems which he never intended to submit ; for sundry old republicans were there, Bradshaw, Haselrig, and others, who were nothing loath to resist and challenge the power which they were compelled to obey. They therefore took the form of government into consideration, and the Protector's authority first of all. Cromwell assured them, with the most solemn earnestness, that this was none of their business, but wholly his own private affair. In a speech of an hour and a half did he labor to impress on them a sense of their own duty, which was, not to concern themselves with him ; concluding with offering them an instrument to sign, in which they bound themselves not to meddle with his sacred office, and placing guards at the doors of the house, who permitted none but subscribers to enter. Of course, the old republicans refused and went home. But even after this purgation, as Mr. Carlyle says in a sorrowful tone, it did not prove a successful parliament. " Respectable pedant persons ! Their history shall remain blank to the end of the world ! "

But the truth of their history was, that they turned with intense longing to the subject which they were forbidden to touch, and, with some small reservations, went back to the

dangerous ground. So earnestly were they employed in such debates, that they did not send up a single bill for him to sign. What was more to the purpose, they voted him no supplies, and apparently did not mean that he should have any. It is not surprising, that, as this writer says, "his esteem for this parliament sank to a marked degree." Still, there was nothing to be said ; and they were well aware that his high-handed energy would leave nothing for them to do. He looked on, "swallowing in silence," and "kept his eye upon the almanac with more and more impatience for the third of February," which completed the five months, at the end of which he had power to dissolve them. Luckily, it occurred to him that the legal months are lunar ; so that at the end of five times twenty-eight days, during which time, as he says in his valedictory, "he did not know whether they had been alive or dead," he courteously recommended to them to vanish, and they saw his face no more.

The Protector and his latest admirer do not appear to have been aware of the real difficulty in this matter ; it was that of giving to the government the air and semblance of freedom, when he was more absolute than any former king. It is hard to make-believe a lie. The forms of government, like the expression of the face, however carefully trained, will sometimes show the true state of things within ; and this unhappy parliament, conscious that they were nothing, and having a natural desire to be something, could not act well their part in the masquerade, when the one assigned them was so degrading and unworthy.

Finding that this expedient would not answer, he threw off the forms of freedom, and divided the kingdom into districts, with a major-general at the head of each, whose powers were absolute, with the exception that they were responsible to himself alone. Mr. Carlyle, whose great knowledge of history enables him to skip over in a masterly manner that which it is distasteful to record, says very little indeed respecting this measure, except, that, if the officers were good men, it might be tolerable, and if otherwise, intolerable ; and knowing that the reader must have the most intimate acquaintance with their persons and characters, he merely sets down their names to enable him to determine. The authority of an honest observer at the time seems to us to inspire more confidence than any such conjecture in the dark.

Mrs. Hutchinson says, — “ These ruled according to their own wills, by no law but what seem'd good in their own eyes, imprisoning men, obstructing the cause of justice between man and man, perverting right through partiality, acquitting some that were guilty, and punishing some that were innocent as guilty ”; — precisely what might have been expected of those who governed by “ divine right,” and unsubjected to human control. Mr. Carlyle despatches in a single line the great financial measure which these bashaws, as Ludlow calls them, were designed to enforce ; which was an exaction of ten *per cent.*, imposed by the Protector's will and pleasure, not on the income, but on the whole property of those who had ever sided with the king, though their offence had been expiated by composition, and they had been exempted by an act of indemnity from all such inflictions. Surely, star-chamber and ship-money, bad as they were, had nothing in them more lawless and tyrannical. To this he added a duty on merchandise, not required by any law. When some men attempted to resist the exaction, as in the case of Sir Peter Wentworth, Cromwell interfered with the action of the courts, and suppressed the suits of the injured persons by an act of his arbitrary power. From Mr. Carlyle we learn, that the taxes imposed by his “ divine right ” were less than was expected, and therefore cheerfully paid. “ Singular,” he says with enthusiasm, “ how popular it seems to grow ! ” Singular it would have been, if there were any reason to believe it. But on the contrary, it appears that the royalists were growing in strength and numbers. The whole amount of this great popularity was, “ great appearance of the country at the assizes, and the gentlemen of the greatest quality served on grand juries ” ; all which goes to show, according to this writer, that the nation was delighted with such proceedings. No doubt, he made reforms in many things where his own interest and authority were not concerned. But those who say so much of his appointment of Sir Matthew Hale to the bench would do well to remember that his upright administration of justice excited the Protector's displeasure, and that he ceased to go the circuit because of the interference of power with the course of the law. Still, after all abatements made necessary by the position in which he stood, above all law, his disposition inclined him to useful measures, his religious spirit

was tolerant to all but Catholics, and, if he had entered by the door into his great office, he would have held it with eminent honor and advantage to the land.

Conscious of the feeling which his independence of law awakened, and hearing doubtless many of those whispers of dissatisfaction which could not be muffled and suppressed, he made the experiment of another parliament, trusting that the fear of his officers and the depression of the aristocracy would enable him to secure that majority which he had signally failed to obtain before. The members were duly returned, most of them well affected to his power and person ; but of course there were some others, like Haselrig, determined republicans, who would speak and act as they pleased. " For these," says Mr. Carlyle, the Protector and his council " have silently provided an expedient, which we hope may be of service " ; — a precious expedient, too, for a free nation ; it was no other than that of excluding all members who were not likely to be on his side, a step which no Stuart or Plantagenet, in the height of his power, would have thought of attempting. " Soldiers stand ranked at the door ; no man enters without his certificate ! astonishing to see ! Haselrig, Scott, and the stiff republicans, Ashley Cooper, and the turbulent persons who might have leavened this parliament into strong fermentation, cannot, it appears, get in ! No admittance here ! Saw ever honorable gentlemen the like ! " Thus pleasantly does a Briton, in the nineteenth century, discourse about one of the most impudently despotic acts ever heard of among those who called themselves free. The excluded members remonstrated fiercely ; but the parliament referred them to the council, who said that it was provided that none could be members but " persons of known integrity, fearing God, and of good conversation " ; and these persons, being deficient in those respects, could not be admitted to their places ; a reply which confirms what we learn in Hudibras of the doctrine of some religionists, who maintained, that, if devils could tell truth to serve their purposes, the saints were less privileged, if they could not occasionally lie when it was needful for theirs.

But after all the pains that were taken to secure a servile body, something of the stern Puritan independence was occasionally manifested there. One member applied to Cromwell the words of the prophet to Ahab, — " Hast thou killed and

also taken possession ? ” But they proceeded with tolerable humility to do what he desired, declaring it high treason to attempt his life, and granting him larger supplies than had ever been raised before. They also passed an act binding all men to renounce Charles Stuart and his family, and, on the whole, fairly earned the prize of Mr. Carlyle's applause. “ They forbore to pester his Highness with quibblings, and cavillings, and constitution pedantries ; accomplished respectably the parliamentary routine ; voted, what perhaps was all that could be expected of them, some needful modicum of supplies ; debated whether it should be debated ; put the question whether the question should be put ; and in a mild way neutralized one another, and, as it were, handsomely *did nothing*, and left Oliver to do.” Such is his idea of the use and office of a legislative body in England, and such the ground on which he applauds them for their discharge of duty.

This parliament, in the excess of their subserviency, believing that they understood his wishes, proposed to him to assume the title and state of a king. In all these proceedings, relating to the kingship, he makes a most humiliating figure ; so that even this writer is sorely perplexed to give a satisfactory explanation of his conduct. Carlyle's shouts of applause die away in a melancholy quaver, and the little flames of admiration, which he places one in each mile along the weary wayside of Cromwell's speeches, to light up the darkness, burn mournfully blue and dim. The parliament made the necessary advances ; but the officers of the army took the alarm, and a deputation of one hundred waited on the Protector, with a remonstrance against his accepting it. He makes answer with not a little sharpness ; but their opposition has its effect, and he returns to the House what Mr. Carlyle truly calls “ a negative, but none of the most decided.” “ His Highness would not, in all circumstances, be inexorable, one would think.” “ It is of the nature of a courtship withal ; the young lady cannot answer, on the first blush of the business ; if you insist on her answering, why then she must even answer, No ! ” The House, though they doubtless thought, that, in this case, the young lady was old enough to know her own mind, understood the meaning of the refusal, and appointed a committee of ninety-nine to press the office upon him. Then follows a conference, in which, as Mr. Carlyle says, it is evident his Highness wishes that

they would draw him out, instead of compelling him to come out ; finding that he will not speak first, they come out with their reasons for the offer, some of which are tolerably substantial. One is, that the powers of a protector are not limited by law, while those of a king are ; and another, that, in case of a restoration of the Stuarts, all who have served a king *de facto* are exempted by law from suffering for it, while those who have served a protector only will be most undesirably exalted. In another conference he answers their reasons at boundless length ; they reply to him in harangues of equal duration ; and so on, communications succeeding each other to the end of the chapter, when he informs them that he cannot accept the title of king. Not because he did not want it ; he was in good hope, that, as men's minds grew familiar with it, opposition would die away. But he found it easier to reconcile his own taste than that of others to the measure ; and Lambert, Fleetwood, and Desborough, sustained by many others, resisted it so vigorously, that he was obliged to give up his inclination ; avenging himself on Lambert by giving him leave to retire to private life, a fate which the other two, had they not been connected with his family, would doubtless have been permitted to share.

Now Mr. Carlyle does not pretend that Cromwell did not covet this distinction ; he evidently thinks he should have had it ; but he is confident that Cromwell held it in light esteem for its own sake, and had divers great and patriotic reasons for desiring it as he did ; he does not know what they were, but some, he is confident, there must have been. White-locke says, that the Protector consulted much with him and some other counsellors about the matter ; and sometimes, throwing aside the restraints of dignity, would “ play at crambo with them.” In fact, he does not appear to have done much else ; the history of proceedings on his part is nothing but crambo ; through the whole he stood like the cat in the adage, “ letting ‘ I dare not ’ wait upon ‘ I would ’ ” ; seeing clearly, that, if he should overcome the resistance of the army, which was very doubtful, he must make a great surrender of popularity and also of substantial power, with almost a certainty of wetting his feet in blood.

Mr. Carlyle finds prodigious difficulty in keeping up his enthusiasm through all these weary doings. He occasionally says, “ A considerable question this of the kingship ; impor-

tant to the nation and the cause he presides over ; to himself not unimportant, and yet to himself of very minor importance." But it is so clear that Cromwell did not consider it a question of mere "feathers in the hat," and that, finding himself unable to take the crown, he came as near it as possible, when inaugurated as Protector, decorating himself in purple, holding a sceptre, with other royal playthings of the kind, that Mr. Carlyle can no longer sustain himself in the heroic vein. His style, unconsciously perhaps, sinks into a sort of pathetic solemnity. He evidently wishes in his heart, that Cromwell had contented himself with his own undeniable greatness, and let the paper cap of royalty alone ; for this low ambition stands so recorded that there is no possibility of disproving or explaining it away.

But while Cromwell was thus a king in every thing but the name, or rather was more and greater than a king, he found that there were some things which power could not do. His parliament, for a wonder, lived long enough to adjourn ; and before it reassembled, he thought it necessary to provide himself with such a House of Lords as could be made to order. Only one of the old nobility was disposed to serve ; the rest were supplied by drawing out members from the Commons, where their votes were wanted ; for, in the establishment of the government, the power of excluding distasteful members had been too hastily surrendered ; the consequence was, that the members formerly excluded easily found their way in, and, as one might suppose, not at all conciliated by their long waiting in outer darkness. When that parliament came together, Fiennes, in an opening speech, compared the two houses to two firmaments, as fashioned at the creation of the world, to keep the elements apart and in order. But unhappily, one house was but a small segment of a circle, and the other was more rich in clouds than stars, and too much agitated itself to do much in keeping the waters from the waters. In fact, one firmament flatly, or perhaps we should say roundly, refused to stand by the other. The Commons would not acknowledge the other house as "lords" ; apparently, not because they were not very sufficient persons, but because they held their nobility solely by the Protector's will. The earliest demonstrations were so unsatisfactory, and it was so manifest that the spirit of freedom was likely to say more than it was altogether pleasant for Cromwell to hear, that he

lost no time in putting a stop to their deliberations. It was said, that, when urged by Fleetwood and some other friends not to dissolve them hastily, he used language more free than decorous, saying that they should not sit a moment longer. It was bad to live without them ; it was impossible for him to live with them. Throwing them aside was only conforming the appearance to the reality of things, and, so far as his power and comfort were concerned, was the less evil of the two.

It is curious to compare his dealings with other nations with those in which his own personal ambition was concerned. In the latter, we cannot find the straightforward manliness which we should have desired to see ; and some of his ways, such as that of selling as slaves for the West Indies persons who were disaffected to himself, are positively detestable to all who have not lost their humanity in their hero-worship. In fact, the winding course in which he travelled to his official elevation is in perfect contrast with the striking, grand, and resistless march in which he led his country to the foremost place among the nations ; for there her prosperity and glory were identical with his own. His first use of power was to make peace with the Dutch and Portuguese on mutually advantageous terms, securing a profitable trade, and putting an end to bloody warfare. Christina of Sweden solicited his alliance ; France, through the cautious Mazarin, was earnest never to offend him ; and Spain, proud as she was in those days, trembled at his displeasure. He showed his inflexible spirit to the world, when the brother of the Portuguese ambassador had committed a cowardly and atrocious murder in London, and endeavoured to shelter himself behind the law of nations. By Cromwell's order, he was seized, tried by a jury, and executed ; somewhat irregularly, no doubt, but giving an example of swift retribution that struck terror into every heart. And yet, the universal fear which his name inspired, the height to which England was exalted, and the terrible energy with which Blake with his fiery besom swept hostile fleets from every sea, were not so honorable to him as his interference in favor of the poor descendants of the Waldenses, on " Alpine mountains cold," whom the Duke of Savoy, because they refused to renounce their religion, was persecuting with fire and sword. He sent them liberal aid from his own purse, compelled France to interfere for their

relief, sorely against her will, and thus extended the mighty arm of his protection to those whom no other human aid could reach. Such acts as this it is delightful to remember. *O si sic omnia!* is the feeling with which we read them.

But a thoroughly self-consistent character, whether for good or evil, is not yet to be found written in the annals of mankind. Feared and respected as Cromwell was, his closing days afford a most impressive lesson to the ambitious, showing how unsound must be the basis of that power which is not established in law, and how poor a consolation to an aching heart is found in eminence and glory. He felt that he was more dreaded than loved or trusted. Though all due reverence was paid to his great ability and station, there were few who in heart said, God bless him! The best friends of the country did not rally at his side; from the day when he trampled down the laws, they stood apart in gloomy displeasure. Having destroyed the reality of freedom, he could not retain the aspect or the name; for it was clear that no parliament could be assembled which would not question and challenge his power. Meantime, the royalists were active in the service of their master, and no fear of death could suppress them; the dark and dangerous fanatics were everywhere maturing plans and conspiracies against him; the republicans, though they hated the name of kings, could not persuade themselves that absolute protectors were any better, and would have rejoiced at any moment to see him overthrown. Unable to put confidence in any, obliged to guard his own life by perpetual suspicion, worn out with never-ceasing demands upon his energies, he often said that such an existence was a burden too heavy for man, as these clouds were gathering their dreary folds around the setting of his day. A sudden attack of fever was the instrumentality which put an end to his life; but the undermining process had long been going on within him; and as soon as he was struck with disease, he fell a shattered and helpless ruin. Ludlow says, that at his death he seemed concerned for the reproaches which men would cast upon his name, as indeed he had reason; and that he was not without misgivings of another kind appears from his rejoicing that he had *once* been in a state of grace, and that the elect could never fall.

It will readily be seen that we have no faith in the idea of Cromwell which Mr. Carlyle has presented. It is, in part,

a creation of his own fancy, which is not unused to this kind of painting, but does not improve by practice. Indeed, Cromwell lived too much in the clear daylight of history, to be seen thus in poetical vision. While all allow him to be among the foremost of the great, it is evident that he was not faultless, and that he was drawn aside by his own master passion from that straight and narrow way of duty and patriotism, which otherwise would have been the path of his choice. He was not highly intellectual ; he was rather a man of action ; his strength of mind was great, but was far exceeded by his strength of heart. While none could surpass his far-reaching discernment in civil affairs, and his practical wisdom in conducting them, we do not find him, like Napoleon, searching into the foundations of law, or forming comprehensive systems for the future benefit of mankind. But, unlike the modern hero, Cromwell had a heart. It was not hardened by the passions and changes of a life so restless and exciting. He would not have been capable of sacrificing his wife and family under the false pretence of regard to the public good. His religion was evidently sincere ; but under strong temptation, it ran sometimes into self-delusion ; he never appears like an open hypocrite, and when he deceived others, he was himself the first victim of the imposture. His character was far better than it has been sometimes represented. He is certainly to be numbered with the great, and, comparatively speaking, with the good ; but there was one fatal stain which a Lethean ocean can never wash away.

Mr. Carlyle's gifts, it is well known, are of the poetical kind ; and here he has exercised somewhat too much of his inventive genius, — a power which, however admirable in its place, is not precisely suited to the work which he undertook to do. He has not set Cromwell before us, but a radiant vision, a beautiful ideal, very pleasant to gaze upon, no doubt, — but, all the while, we feel that it is not the living man, not the Cromwell whose true history and heart we are solicitous to know. He has done for this great character what Malone did, in the last century, for the ancient colored bust of Shakespeare, when he ingeniously covered up the only remaining representation of the eyes, complexion, and hair of the great dramatist with a thick coat of white lead ; an act for which other antiquarians affectionately wished him translated, not specifying to what regions it was their hope that he might go.

With those who do not examine it attentively, this will pass for a book of great research, because it revives the declining interest in a passage of history which has been neglected of late years. But it will require still greater research on the reader's part to discover what passages in Cromwell's life this great bonfire has lighted up. It is easier to find those which were formerly clear, but are made obscure in the work before us by throwing them needlessly into shade. We do not think that this book compares in value or interest with that on the French Revolution, though it has defects of the same description. Eloquent passages and original humor, of course, there must be ; but the writer is still oftener oracular, conceited, and portentous, and his waggery is sometimes untimely and intolerable, "like him that singeth songs to a heavy heart." On the whole, these pictorial histories are of no great service to the cause of truth ; the great talents of this writer might be employed to better advantage ; and though his desperate and indiscriminate admirers will tell him otherwise, the world would lose nothing, if he would leave this field to less original, but more patient and laborious writers.

ART. VI. — *The Greece of the Greeks.* By G. A. PERDICARIS, A. M., late Consul of the United States at Athens. New York : Paine & Burgess. 1845. 2 vols. 12mo.

THESE entertaining and well written volumes are from the pen of Mr. G. A. Perdicaris, a gentleman born in Greece, but an American by education and adoption. Many of our readers will remember a very interesting course of lectures, delivered by him in different parts of the United States, between 1833 and 1835, upon the literature of Modern Greece. The subject was new to all but a few scholars, and the accomplished lecturer treated it in a manner highly attractive to all who held the name of Greece in honor, for her illustrious achievements of old in every path of glory, and for the noble manner in which she had, within the present century, thrown off the yoke of the barbarian. Those lectures contained the